

**From:** [Bryan J Pesta](#)  
**To:** [Bryan J Pesta](#); [Bryan Pesta](#)  
**Subject:** My status at CSU  
**Date:** Saturday, January 15, 2022 4:12:48 PM

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Dear Colleagues,

I suspect rumors might exist in the College regarding me and CSU's on-going investigation of my research. The initial investigation, though, was finalized on 1/14, as the provost decided I should be fired. I do, however, get an appeal, which I think is pending.

In the interest of trying to preserve my reputation, if possible, I'm giving anyone interested here the opportunity to review all the relevant investigation documents (unfortunately, this is about 350 pages over six months— for an investigation that should have lasted no more than 120 days— according to CSU policy). If interested, the link below contains almost the entire document set. Please note that I am indeed allowed to share this via CSU policy, and that no one is tracking who clicks on the link:

[https://www.dropbox.com/sh/3am2n5l015k154k/AADzd5shOo2WTw\\_cX7iN6mroa?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/3am2n5l015k154k/AADzd5shOo2WTw_cX7iN6mroa?dl=0)

However, the issues here are rather complex (which did not help me), and so I'm providing below a background statement in the hopes of facilitating comprehension of all the documents. Finally, there is one more document— my reply to the provost's recent decision— that won't be in the link above until it's finalized (no later than the first week of class). It will be, however, an important document for my investigation here.

Finally, I apologize for sending an unsolicited very long mass-email, but I've been at CSU in some capacity since 1986. Both my kids are here now as well. My goal is to rehabilitate my reputation, and toward that end, I will not go gentle into that good night.

Bryan

p.s. I don't know if any of you also conduct controversial research but be aware that you may have to defend yourself, at risk of your career, from complainants external to CSU. Moreover, the complainants are allowed to say anything and everything they want, but you won't even get to cross examine them. Also, to the extent your research is technically complicated, make sure that you insist that an expert in your research area be on the investigative committee.

Finally, feel free to share this email with anyone.

**Background Statement, Bryan J. Pesta,  
CSU's Internal Investigation (6/29/2021 - 1/13/2022)**



All the present allegations stem from my collaboration with a student research assistant named John Fuerst. I knew of John prior to our collaboration because we published in the same subdisciplines. As it turns out, John is also local to Cleveland, and so we met for lunch back in

2017.

John proposed a potential collaboration using National Institute of Health (NIH) genetic data to study race / ethnicity and IQ. The NIH genetic data are highly sensitive— participants can literally be personally identified just by their numbers in an Excel spreadsheet. As such, there was a burden on me to preserve the integrity and anonymity of the NIH data. I took this burden seriously.

I ultimately agreed to collaborate with John, conditioned upon us looking at additional variables beyond just intelligence. My partial rationale was that I did not want every line of my CV to be on this topic, plus I am generally interested in the genetics of other variables as well.

We later agreed on submitting three data applications to the NIH; one on race and IQ, another on sex differences (for which I also have a published paper on), and one on mental health issues (for which I also have a published paper on). All three applications were for the same NIH dataset, “Trajectories of Complex Phenotypes” (TCP).

The NIH approved all three applications, again for the same TCP dataset. We submitted three applications for the same TCP dataset to ensure that our research interests here were fully disclosed. This becomes critically important later, though the committee and administration refuse to even acknowledge that we indeed submitted three applications for the same TCP dataset (we did so for due diligence, given the sensitive nature of the data we were applying for).

Our first publication with TCP data was on race and IQ. This was the Lasker et al. paper mentioned throughout the correspondence here:

<https://www.mdpi.com/2624-8611/1/1/34>

It's rather technical, which illustrates why it would have been nice to have a genetics expert on the CSU investigative committee. The administration, however, denied my request on this point.

Shortly thereafter (in 2019), academics external to CSU objected to the Lasker et al. paper and complained to both CSU and the NIH.

My perception is that these complaints, specifically the ones by Bird and colleagues, were fishing expeditions undertaken by social justice warriors. For example, I counted 21 “bullet point” allegations against me in the Bird et al. original complaint (some of which were patently absurd). The NIH, however, ultimately agreed with just six of these allegations and sent us notice back in the fall of 2019.

We sent a detailed rebuttal to the NIH on the very next day of their initial complaint, but the

NIH failed to respond. Thereafter, the NIH kept approving our newer data renewal requests and applications— for approximately two years, even after their 2019 complaint to us! Given this, we thought we were in good standing with the NIH. So, we pressed on with our research.

What else could we have thought here, given the nearly two-year NIH delay in replying to our email? Note, we indeed expected some immediate reply from the NIH back in 2019, given they were the ones to initiate the email exchange with us in the first place! But that reply didn't happen until mid 2021.

So, the NIH finally replied to our 2019 email in the spring of 2021 (I believe the NIH response here was due to pressure from CSU for them to respond so that CSU could pounce). Here, though, the NIH reduced its number of allegations from about six in 2019 to the three or so that remain presently. Interestingly, however, the NIH changed its focus from the Lasker et al. publication to a preprint on a parallel publication that John had posted to ResearchGate (ironically, I don't even appear as an author on the published version of the posted preprint, but I'm being fired, in part, for this).

In sum, the NIH clearly switched goal posts here, by now focusing on the preprint, presumably because I successfully defended all allegations against me related to the Lasker et al. publication that started all this.

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### **My Intelligence Research**

My interest in human intelligence started in 1990, when I took a “Human Abilities” course at CSU with Professor John Burns. I was fascinated by both the construct validity of general mental ability (g), its predictive power, and the fact that individual and group differences correlate so consistently with important life outcomes. My interest here was reinforced at the University of Akron, where I took extra classes in statistics and psychometrics for my PhD.

What I believe over a century of intelligence research has shown:

1. IQ scores are the single best predictors of important life outcomes (e.g., job performance, educational success).
2. Mean IQ scores vary by (self-identified) race / ethnicity. We've known this since World War I, but we don't know why they vary.
3. IQ tests are neither culturally nor psychometrically biased against minorities, at least in the USA. For example, the National Institute of Health's “restricted-access” data that I analyzed showed strict measurement invariance across all the racial and ethnic groups that I studied.
4. The cause(s) of these test-score differences (i.e., nature, nurture, or both) remain unknown.



5. This subdiscipline does not suffer from the replication crisis that faces much of social science today. The group-difference effects here are frustratingly persistent across 100 years of study.

### **Race, Ethnicity, and IQ**

Please note, the most common counterargument I get when discussing this area is that “race” does not exist— it is just a social construct. I agree. This is why my research pitted “Self-Identified Race / Ethnicity” (i.e., race as a social construct) against genetic ancestry (i.e., race as a biogeographic variable).

If one grants that average, paper and pencil, race and ethnic group differences in mean IQ scores exist (with a record of data going back to World War I), why would any non-racist person be interested in studying them? In my opinion, the problem with ignoring group differences is that we risk not maximizing human well-being for everyone.

Specifically, when power is defined as prediction accuracy, intelligence is hands down the most powerful variable in social science. Moreover, many of the variables that IQ correlates with constitute obvious “sub-domains” of human well-being. Examples include education, health, income (SES) and crime. The well-being sub-domains, themselves, tend to be strongly intercorrelated. As such, a nexus of intercorrelated, well-being variables exists. For better or worse, IQ scores are a central and important node in this nexus (Pesta, McDaniel & Bertsch, 2010).

For unknown reasons, race and ethnicity are also central nodes in this nexus, with certain minority groups falling strongly on the short end of multiple measures of well-being. Thus, ignoring IQ differences across groups, when they map reasonably well onto well-being differences, seems ostrich like. This is especially so given that measured cognitive ability differences can statistically explain much of these well-being differences. It therefore seems rather important for researchers to determine the causes of these behavioral differences. In fact, I think solving this puzzle would do more to increase global human well-being than would solving any other problem faced by social science today.

In this domain, I’ve strived to conduct research that is purely data versus theory driven. My work is published in respectable outlets. Indeed, I’ve been awarded CSU merit pay several times based on my research quality and output, which includes my publications on this topic. Finally, despite conducting controversial research, I have been an asset to our diverse student body for over two decades, and I am happy to secure minority-student testimonials for anyone's consideration.

### **Conclusion**

In sum, I underscore that: At the outset, and in response to the dozens of allegations made

against me in this investigation, to the extent any of my conduct departed from accepted practices or was otherwise incorrect, I did not “intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly” commit those actions. Specifically, I have never intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misrepresented my intended use of NIH data, used that data to pursue unethical research activity, or improperly shared controlled-access data with anyone.

I welcome any email comments, questions or concerns based on all this. Please reply just to my non-CSU email here: **bpesta22@cs.com**

Sincerely,

Bryan J. Pesta